

The most important population estimate for development of a CTP is that of the planning area. Even though government census data is not available for the transportation planning area, other methods of estimation of population are available. Using a combination of census data, building permits and a 2005 housing “windshield survey”, a final count of 2,313 households inside the Swansboro Planning Area was determined by the following method:

- The total number of dwelling units for each of the ten Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs) were estimated by adding the 2000 Census totals to the number of new houses built between 2000 and 2005;
- Each zone’s average person per household, as established by the 2000 Census, was then multiplied by the number of households to determine zonal populations;
- Finally, the population sum for the ten zones was used as the planning area total. (See the Traffic Model Section for a detailed explanation of TAZs.)

Planning area totals and projections are shown in Table 3. The North Carolina Department of Transportation – Transportation Planning Branch and the Town of Swansboro agreed upon the population projections in February 2006.

Table 3

Population Projections for the Swansboro Planning Area		
Year	Town of Swansboro	Planning Area
2000	1,459	4,594
2005	2,618	5,480
2035	5,073	9,447

Economy and Employment

An important factor considered in estimating the future traffic growth of an area is its economic base. The number of employers and the employee’s income or purchasing power influences how much population can be supported in the area and the number of motor vehicles that will be locally owned and operated. Generally, as the family income increases so does the number of vehicles owned, as well as the number of vehicle trips generated per day by each household. An accurate projection of the future economy of the area is essential to estimating future travel demand.

Factors which will influence economic growth and development in the Swansboro Planning Area over the planning period is development along the NC 24 corridor and the continued revitalization of the downtown area. The working population in the planning area is mainly a mixture of retail trade, educational services, accommodation and food services, and other services. Base year employment data, shown in Table 4, was developed by estimating the number of employees by sector in each TAZ, then